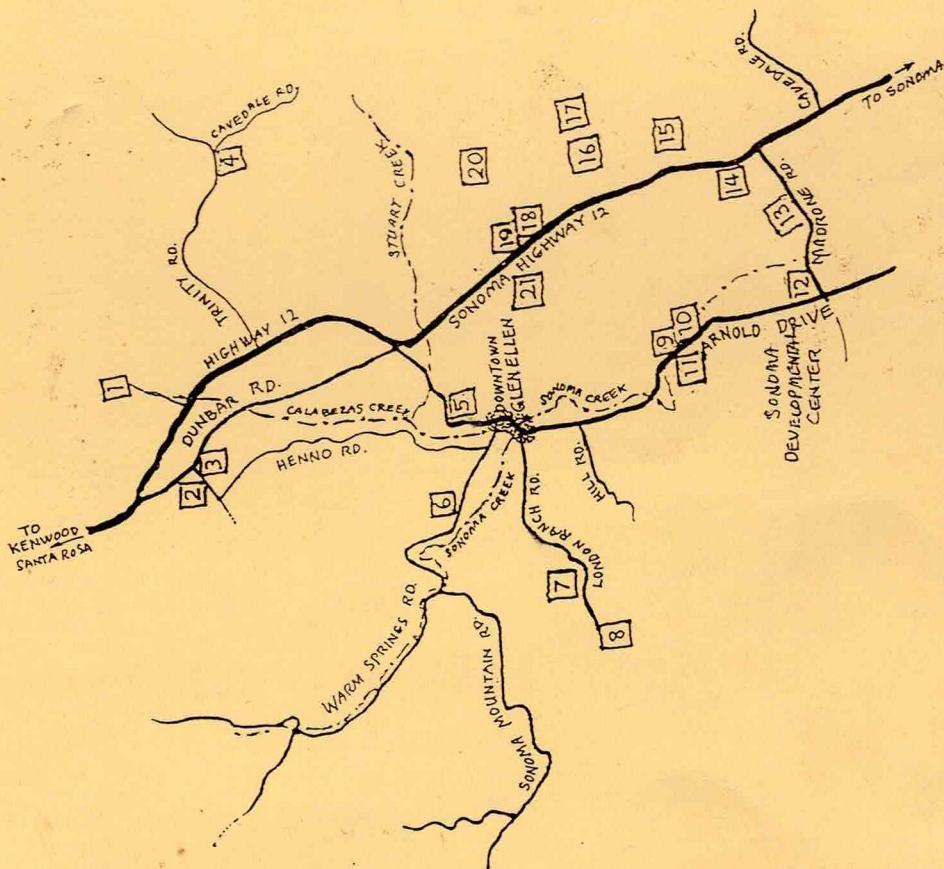
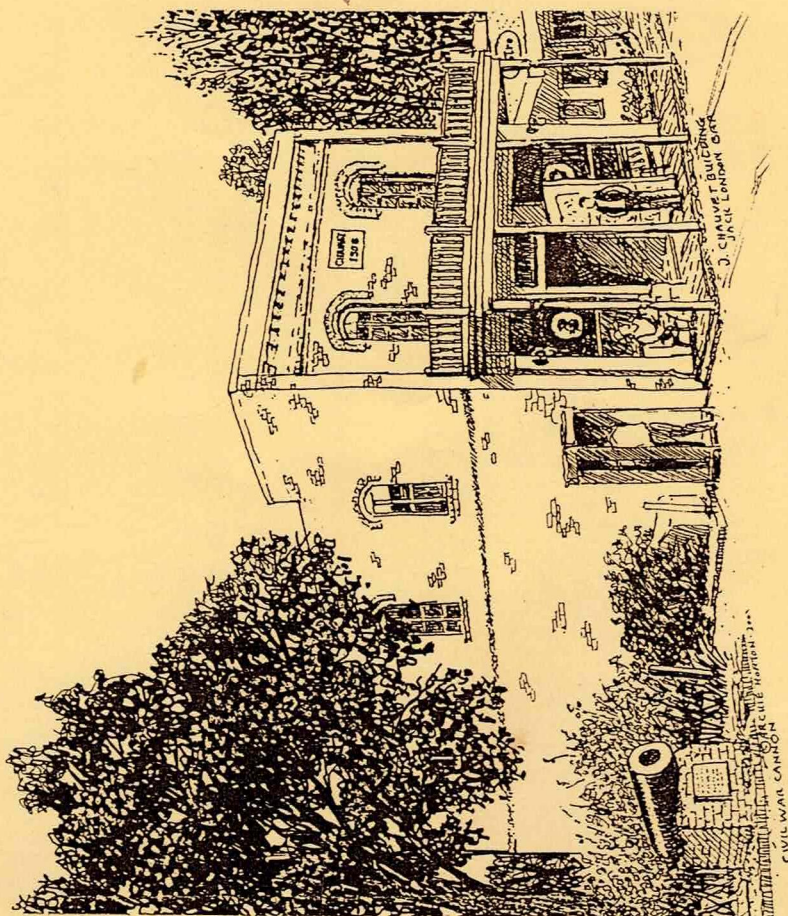


# SELF-GUIDED

# WALKING TOUR OF DOWNTOWN GLEN ELLEN



- |    |                          |    |                             |
|----|--------------------------|----|-----------------------------|
| 1  | Beltane Ranch            | 11 | Jack London Bookstore       |
| 2  | Wellington Vineyards     | 12 | Chandelle of Sonoma         |
| 3  | Dunbar School            | 13 | Valley of the Moon Winery   |
| 4  | Above The Clouds B. & B. | 14 | B.R. Cohn Winery            |
| 5  | Glen Ellen Firehouse     | 15 | Oak Hill Farm               |
| 6  | Glenelly Inn B. & B.     | 16 | Imagery Estate Winery       |
| 7  | Benziger Family Winery   | 17 | Arrowood Vineyards & Winery |
| 8  | Jack London State Park   | 18 | The Secret Garden           |
| 9  | Mucca Restaurant         | 19 | Garden Court Cafe & Bakery  |
| 10 | Carmenet Marketplace     | 20 | Bouverie Audubon Preserve   |
|    |                          | 21 | Sonoma Valley Regional Park |

495



## A HISTORY OF GLEN ELLEN "IN A NUTSHELL"

This is a brief history of the Glen Ellen district, leading up to the development of the downtown area in the 1880's.

Indians came to this place more than 5000 years ago. The first inhabitants of the northern part of the valley were the Wappo, Southern Pomo and Coastal Miwok's. The valley was rich with natural resources, such as plentiful fish in the streams and acorns from the Valley Oaks.

El Rancho Agua Caliente was one of two large Mexican land grants in the valley established after the Sonoma Mission was built in 1823. It extended from Nun's Canyon Rd. south to the Bay and west to Petaluma. General Vallejo acquired the grant in 1839 and built a lumber mill next to Sonoma Creek that same year. (where Jack London Village is today)

Joshua Chauvet bought the site from Vallejo in the early 1850's and converted the mill to making flour with his grist stones. Later he built a winery and produced wine and brandy. A history of the property and Chauvet family can be found at the winery history center at the Village.

The pioneer era of the town in the latter part of the 19th century saw immigrants come here from the East and Europe. Some, like Joseph Wegener from Germany, obtained land holdings from Vallejo in exchange for work or bought land outright like Chauvet. There were a number of English families that settled on the east side of the valley who started vineyards. They were referred to as 'remittance' people because they were financed to come and form a colony of sorts.

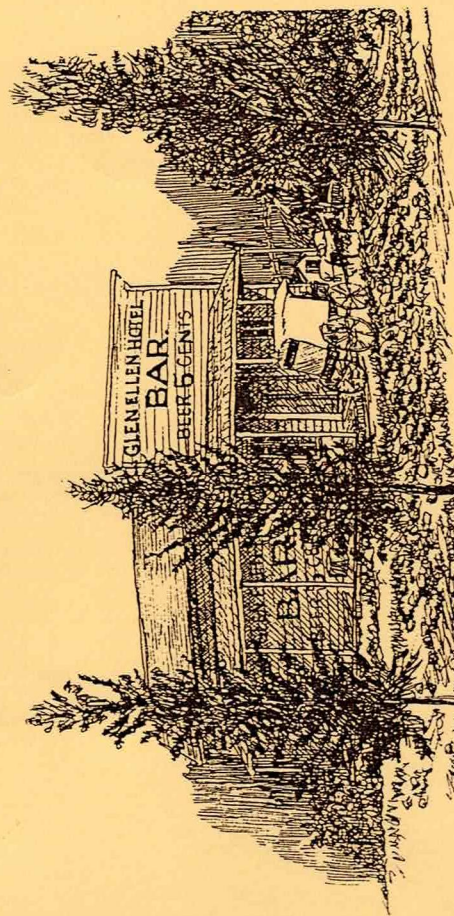
The east side was the beginnings of the town. There was a 'half-way' house between Sonoma and Santa Rosa where Arnold Dr. and Highway 12 are now; it was a stage coach stop layover. North on Santa Rosa Rd. (now Dunbar) was the Charles Justi Ranch where the town's first post office was located in 1872. Beyond Justi's was the Behler Ranch, and across the road from it was the town's first one-room school house.

(continued on inside of back cover)

Charles Stuart purchased land across the road from the halfway house and named his ranch Glen Ellen after his wife. The story goes that the people in the community wanted a local post office and chose the name Lebanon, but the name was disallowed so the locals chose the name Glen Ellen instead. After that, Stuart renamed his ranch Glen Oaks.

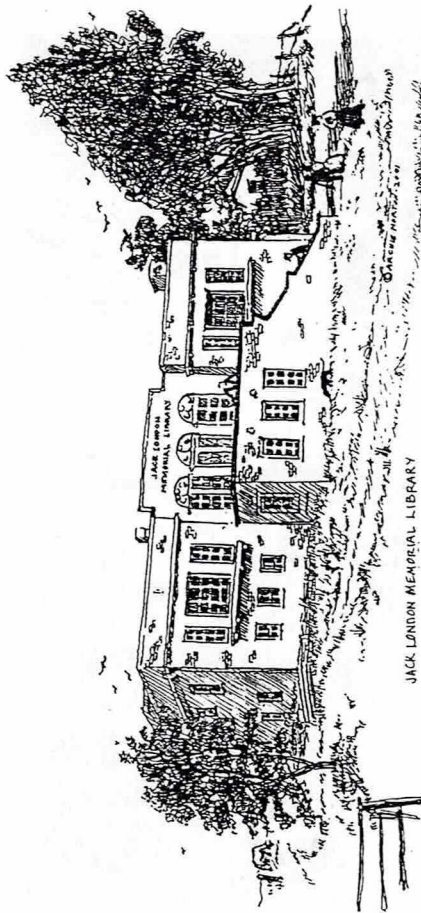
What brought the location of the town center down to the confluence of Sonoma and Calabazas Creeks? It was the combination of transportation routing, tourism, the beauty of the Glen, and other things. The main Well's Fargo route through town from Santa Rosa was along the present Arnold Drive roadway, passing through the grist mill, Chauvet winery property. Two trains were routed through downtown Glen Ellen, first the Sonoma Valley RR (later Northwestern Pacific) in 1882, and second, the Carquinez to Santa Rosa RR (later the Southern Pacific) in 1888. The SVRR had its terminus in town near Calabazas Creek. The trains brought travelers and tourists from the Bay Area. The Mervyn Hotel was built in 1885, the C.J. Poppe store in 1883, and so on.

Glen Ellen became a booming little town in vacation periods and on holidays; tourism added to its status as a farming and wine-making community. People came here for the climate, beauty, and resort atmosphere.



SITE OF THE GLEN ELLEN HOTEL (1880-'90s) IS NOW THE PARKING AREA NEXT TO FINLANDIA BAKERY and Cafe.





Up on London Ranch Road (once called Bennett Ave. and the way out to Bennett Valley Rd.) just beyond Roberston Rd. is the foundation of the Jack London Memorial Library. The building was erected in 1923 by the Glen Ellen Women's Club as a memorial to Jack London. It was a community center for many years. It had an upstairs library and meeting hall and a downstairs kitchen. It was torn down in the 40's due to disrepair and insufficient funds for upkeep.

*End of tour:* If you have any questions, let us know at our address, tel. number, or e-mail.

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# SELF - GUIDED WALKING TOUR of downtown GLEN ELLEN

**Starting Point:** Charles J. Poppe Building.  
Before going on the walking tour take a look at the map in the center of the booklet. The narrative covers the history of building and sites from the vantage points of the numbers on the map.

**Text:**  
Pen and Ink Drawings:\*

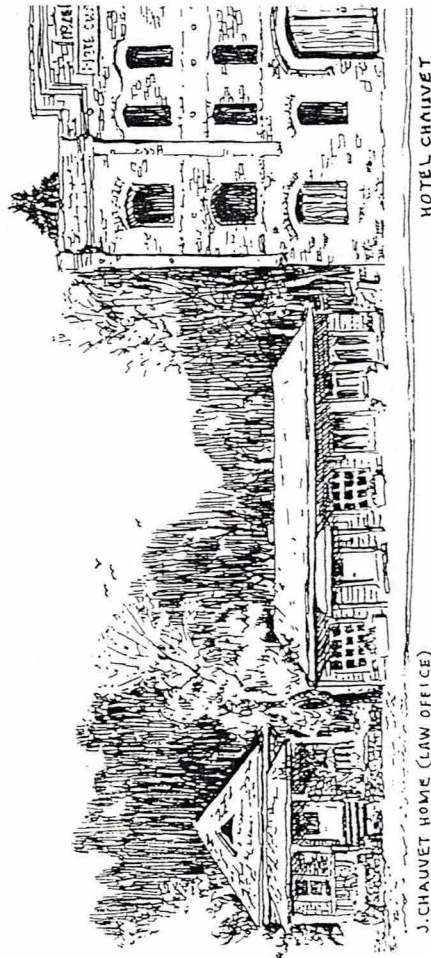
Bob Glotzbach  
Archie Horton

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\* Drawings of historical buildings from the following collections: Glen Ellen Historical Society; Sonoma League for Historic Preservation; Sonoma Valley Historical Society

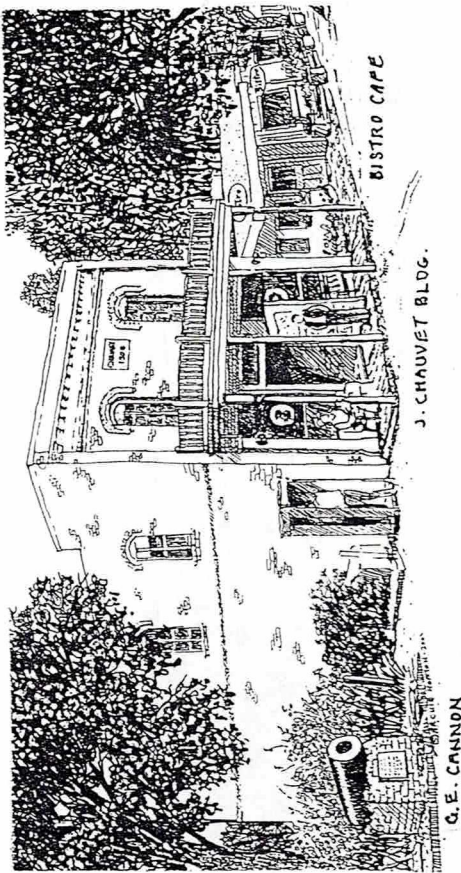




1) From in front of the Poppe Building

The hill south of town was the site of the *Glen Ellen School*. It was a 1-story, two room schoolhouse, from first to 4th and fifth to 8th grades. After it burnt down in October, 1925, students went to school at three other downtown locations prior to the opening of the present Dunbar School in 1930. Two of the locations were the *Riverside Hotel* and the *Gaige House*. There were four 1- or 2- room school houses in the Glen Ellen District at one time, plus a fifth at Eldridge for its clients. Besides the downtown school, there were the old Dunbar School, near what was once the intersection of Dunbar and Nun's Canyon Rds., Enterprise School on Enterprise Rd. near Bennett Valley Rd. and Trinity School near the intersection of Trinity and Cavedale Rds.

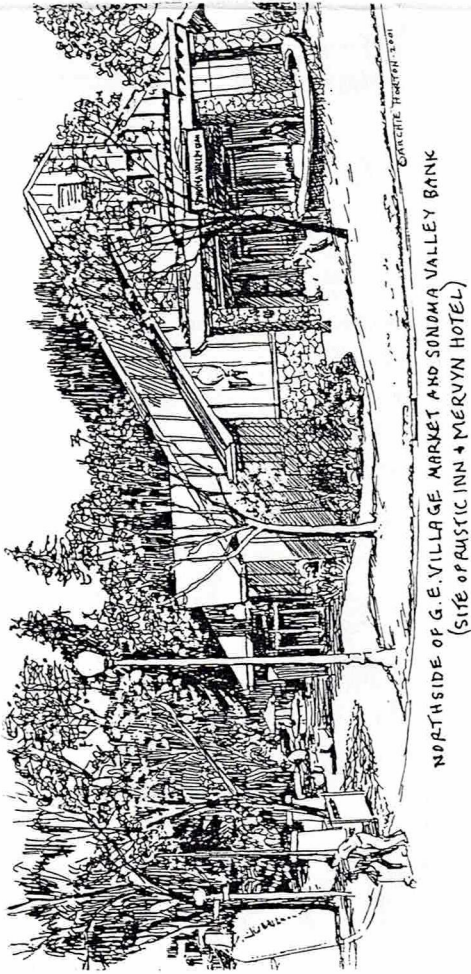
The lawyer's office bldg. down the street is known as the *Joshua Chauvet Home*, a Sonoma County Landmark. It was built by Joshua Chauvet in 1905 from bricks made at his brickyard in the Glen Ellen Circle. He died in 1908 and never lived in the house. It was a residence for many years, and Dr. Francis, a phar-



12) Near the Glen Ellen Cannon:

This whole area west of the creek at one time was a city park. Bill Sobbe, a local saloon owner, constructed a flag pole here in 1897, as sort of a town center. There once was a 2 story wooden building near the creek and a blacksmith shop over by Robertson Road area. That became the town's first auto repair shop. Chauvet built the Chauvet Building in 1905 and that same year a General Wagner gave the Cannon to the town as a gift. It was placed right in front of the flag pole. (read the plaque on the cannon). Wouldn't it be nice to have plaques on all the important buildings and sites in town? The building has had many uses over the years. It was a grocery store in the early part of the century. The Native Son's met on the 2nd floor. The wooden building next to it by the creek was a candy store and a barber shop at one time. Henry Buck had his famous Buck's Place bar there for many years. And Chef Cardini is remembered for his fine restaurant. Also at one time there were three houses in what is now the bar's parking lot.



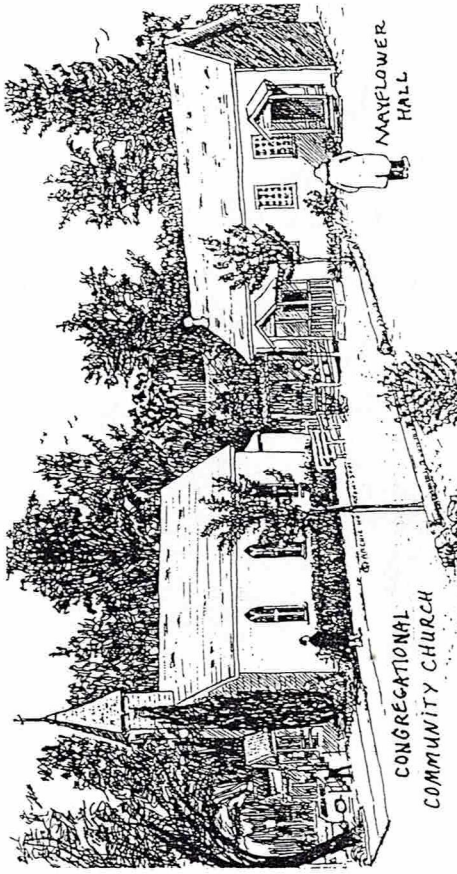


as a 2-story stone structure, but the top floor was damaged in the 1906 earthquake and was replaced with a wooden structure. The north corner later became the town's post office. The building is a county landmark. Its history is inscribed on a plaque near the front door.

## 2) North side of Glen Ellen Village market:

Near where you're standing was the *Rustic Inn*, a favorite bar and meeting place over the years until it burned down in 1974. It stood about where the Sonoma Valley Bank is today. The original building was Borman's General Store, and then came a succession of saloons: The Capital Saloon, Farrell's, Monahan's, the Shamrock (with a barber shop in back); Buck's Place; and the Rustic Inn. Buck is said to have had a still hidden behind his bar during prohibition. Buck moved his saloon across the street to make way for the Rustic Inn.

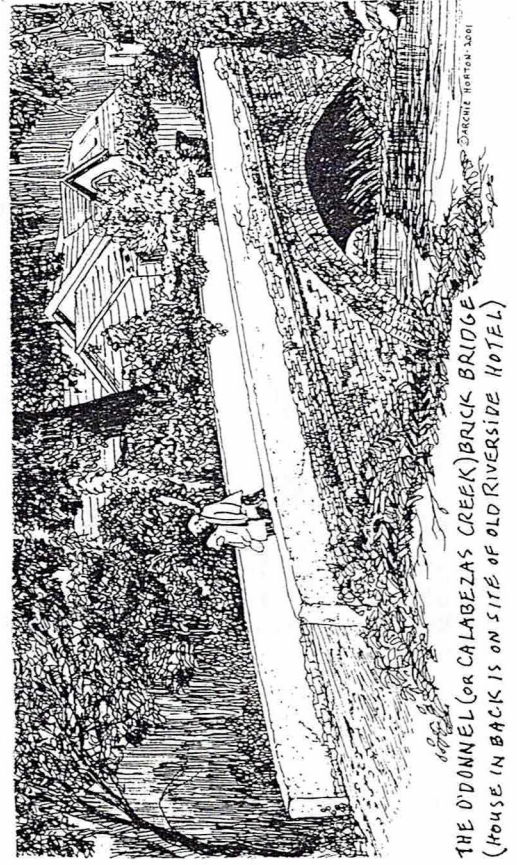
One of the Rustic's famous devotees was Hazen Cowan, horse trainer, rodeo rider, and a fixture in town from the turn of the century; he worked on the London Ranch for many years. He and his father, James, hauled large stones



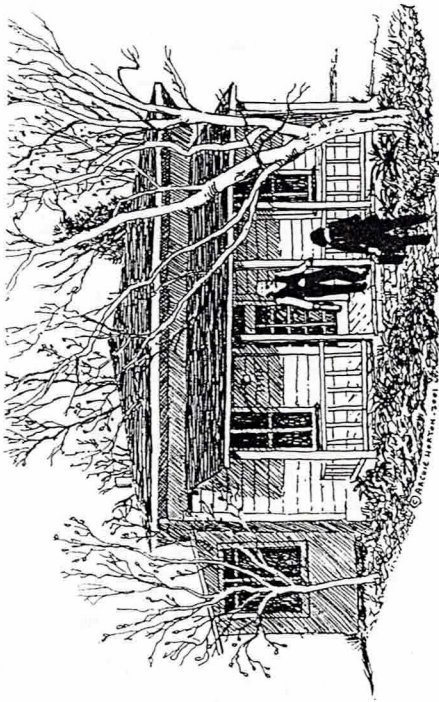
Across the street here, behind the bam-boo, was a two story home where The William Ping family lived. Ping was the great grandfather of Virginia Solari who lives here in town.

## 10) The O'Donnell Bridge:

This present bridge was built in the early 1900's entirely from brick (from the brickyard?). The top part was redone many years ago. It's a Sonoma County landmark and one of the oldest bridges of its type in the county and state.



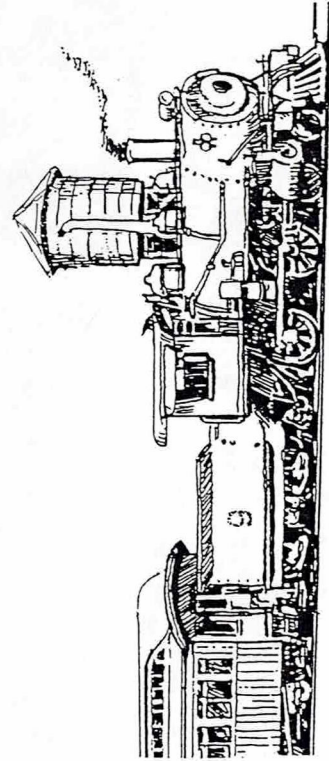




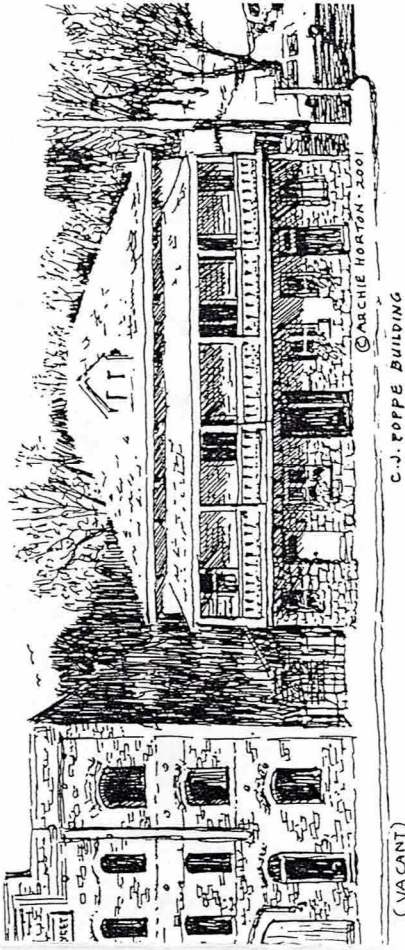
STATION MASTER'S HOUSE: N.W.P. R.R.

# 11) By the office near the post office:

The tracks of the NWP railroad came through here and the train station was just on the north side of O'Donnell Lane (now Glen Ellen Inn cottages). The office building once was the home of the station master and was moved from the corner where the vet's building is now. As mentioned, there were no other buildings than the trainmaster's house, the depot, train barn and watertower between the Glen Ellen Bridge and the Gaige House. Hard to believe! Oh! Yes! There was a public outhouse near the creek. There also was a sizeable "hobo jungle" along the creek just north of Warm Springs Rd.



N.W.P. #9 LOCOMOTIVE: THE LITTLE ENGINE THAT DID.



C.J. POPPE BUILDING

macist, lived there in 1914; he ran a drug store in the corner of the Poppe Building.

The *Hotel Chauvet* was built by Chauvet in 1906 of yellow bricks from the brickyard. It's the one remaining hotel structure of five hotels existing in the town in the early 1900's, and, it was a favorite spot in the valley for dining and dancing. The ground floor was a public space; there were hotel rooms on the two upper floors and a large dance floor on the 3rd floor as well. The hotel is on the National Registry of Historic Places as well as being a Sonoma County landmark.

The Hotel has been vacant for a decade and there have been several development proposals in this space of time. Nothing has come to fruition yet. Lets hope!

The *Charles J. Poppe Store* was built in 1883 and Poppe was the owner and proprietor until his death in 1926. It was a general store in the early days; the *Pioneer Saloon*, owned by Poppe's father-in-law, was on the corner. The original store burned down in 1905 along with other buildings in the area. It was rebuilt

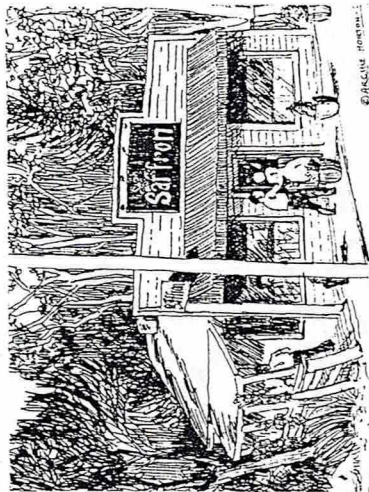




THIERKOFF OAK TREE



RAEGENE AFRICA'S VILLAGE  
MERCHANTILE & GIFT SHOP  
(VACATED IN YEAR 2000)

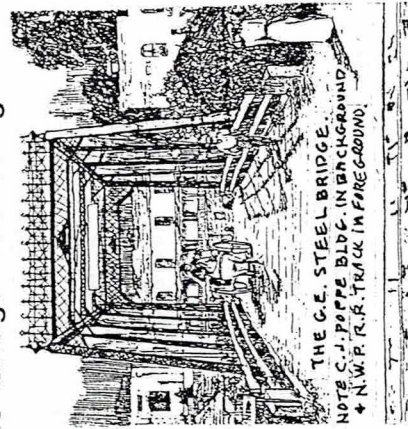


SAFFRON RESTAURANT WAS ORIGINALLY  
THOMPSON'S PLUMBING.

### 3) From the Glen Ellen Bridge:

The main road from Sonoma traveled up along Calabazas Ave. (Arnold Dr.) and turned abruptly to the right at the Rustic Inn, crossing a double-span, wooden bridge over Sonoma Creek; it was built in the 1850's at Gibson's Ferry, named for James Gibson, a well-known Glen Ellenite of the time. Wells Fargo stage coaches must have forded the creek on their route to Santa Rosa before a bridge was built.

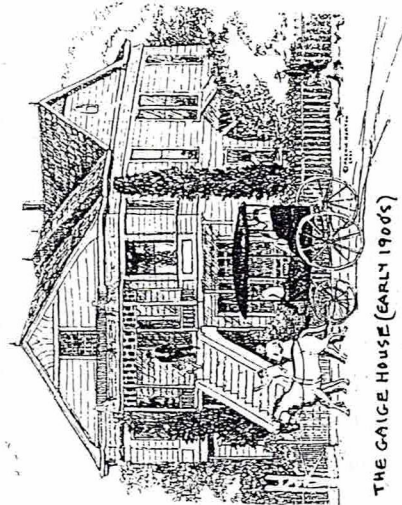
The bridge was replaced by a single span steel suspension bridge in 1890 and rebuilt again in 1939 as the present day, concrete double span bridge. While the bridge was being rebuilt, a temporary make shift crossing was used in the vicinity of O'Donnell Ln. and Henno Rd. It's good that makeshift bridges can be built for emergencies. The town is somewhat like an island, with several dozen creeks and creeklets to be crossed to enter/exit.



THE G.E. STEEL BRIDGE.  
NOTE C.J. POPPE BLDG. IN BACKGROUND  
+ N.W.P. R.R. TRACK IN FOREGROUND.

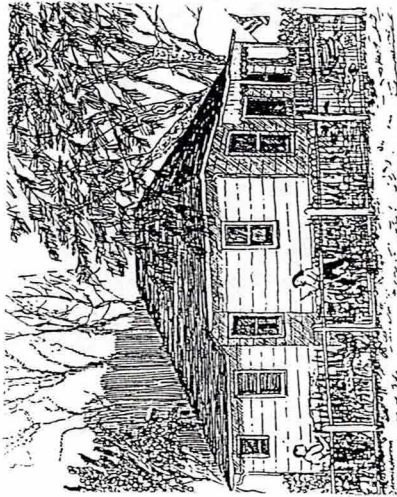
fire house was built there in the 20's or 30's. When you go by, you'll notice a large garage door on the building to accomodate fire engines. Up around the bend is the Gaige House, built in 1900 by Albert Gaige in a Queen Anne style. The Gaiges were a prominent family in town and charter members of the Congregational Church. Besides his meat market, Gaige had a slaughter house along Calabazas Creek.

Mrs. Gaige was active with the Glen Ellen Women's Club. Al Gaige died in 1918; the family sold the Gaige House shortly thereafter to Felice Pagani, one of the Pagani brothers who were prominent wine makers and vineyardists in the valley. It was a rooming house for many years and a temporary school for a year or two after the school in Glen Ellen burnt down. It's a Sonoma County historical landmark.

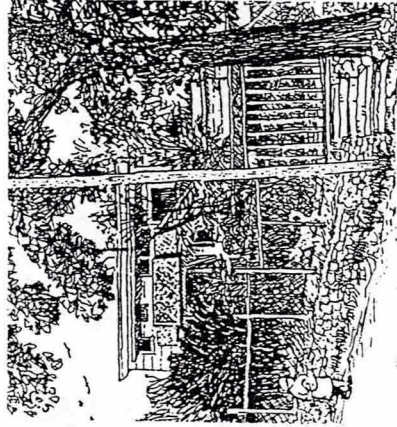


THE GAIGE HOUSE (EARLY 1900S)





THE GAIGE SWEETHEART HOUSE (1905) IS NOW THE PARSONAGE FOR C.E. COMM. CHURCH.



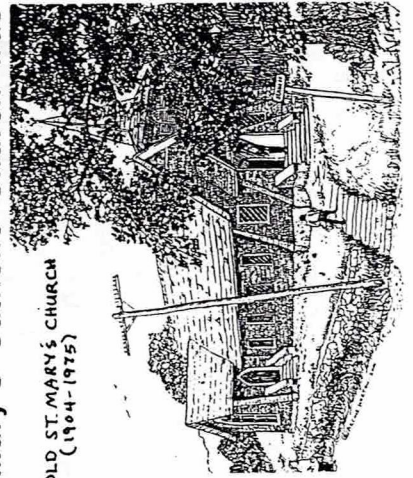
SITE OF OLD ST. MARY'S CHURCH. THE STONE WALL AND STEPS SURVIVED THE 1975 FIRE.

### 8) Corner Warm Springs and Henno Roads:

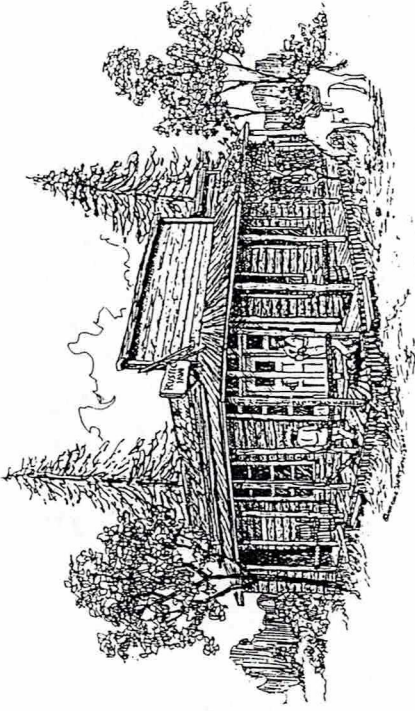
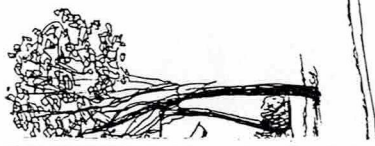
The northeast corner is the site of the old St. Mary's Catholic Church which burned down in 1975. It was a mission church cared for by townspeople with services conducted on Sundays by a priest from Sonoma. On the west side is a home built by Al Gaige's son in 1905 for his sweetheart. She married someone else, but the two did get together years later.

### 9) O'Donnell Lane and Henno:

The Community Church and Mayflower Hall are on a lot donated by Dr. O'Donnell in 1894; the church was built in 1895 and the Hall in about 1902. The land for St. Mary's Catholic Church was also donated by the O'Donnells and was built in 1904. The 2 churches were the center of community life early in the century. Up O'Donnell Lane, next to the church, is the early parsonage, now a home.



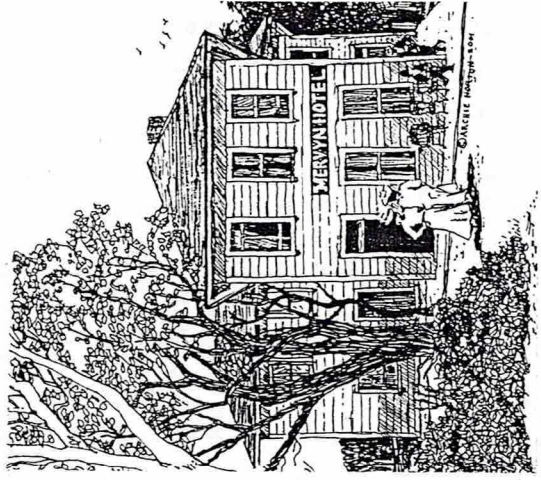
OLD ST. MARY'S CHURCH (1904-1975)



RUSTIC INN, et al.

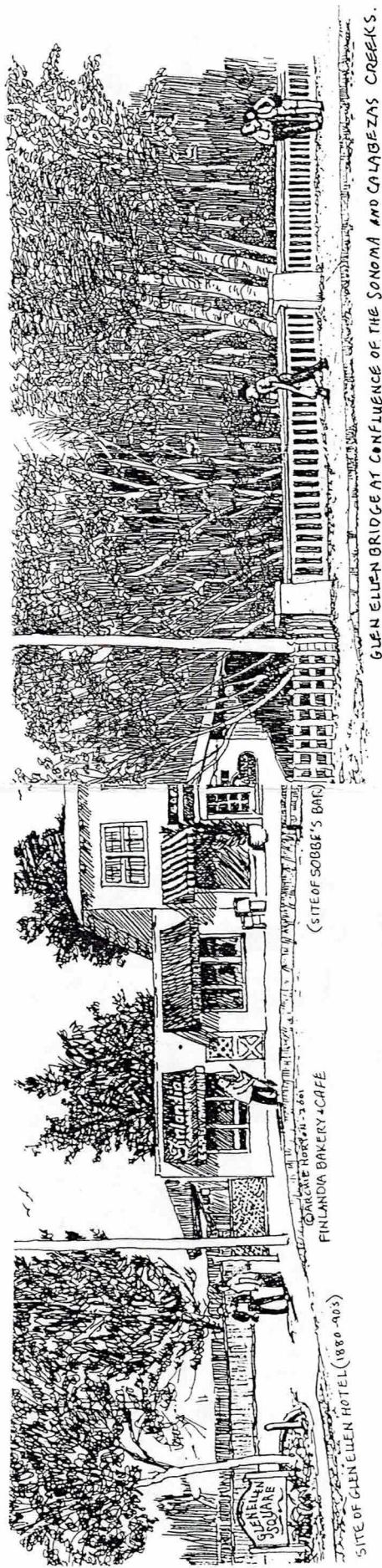
from the east side of the valley for the building of the Wolf House.

In the back of the Rustic Inn, along Sonoma Creek, was the *Mervyn Hotel*. The hotel was built in 1885 by J.L. Peters to accommodate the tourist trade that came into town by railway. It was owned and operated by the Monahans and O'Rourke's in the early 1900's and managed by Henry Buck at one time. As the Hotel Chauvet, the Mervyn Hotel was a favorite dining and dancing spot in the Valley and offered boat rides in Sonoma Creek. The site is a Sonoma County landmark; it would be nice to have a kitchen here some day to preserve the history of this era. Photos and other memorabilia could be displayed.



THE GLEN ELLEN VILLAGE MARKET IS ON THE SITE OF THE MERVYN HOTEL.





There were a number of buildings on the east side of Glen Ellen Ave. A home was on the corner and Bill Sobbe's bar was next to it. They were replaced by a large general merchandise store before 1911. Next to it was the Glen Ellen Hotel built by the Farnocchias in the 1880's or 90's and owned and run by Crofoot and Gibson around 1900. The hotel also catered to railroad men in those early years. North of it was Native Son's Hall, where the Congregational Church had its beginnings in 1894. On the first floor of the building was a meat market, owned and operated by Albert Gaige. In those days, meat markets were separate from grocery stores.

In 1923 or '24, some or all of the buildings in this area burned down. This was before the volunteer fire department was established, at a time when the townspeople fought fires with a "bucket brigade." The Meglens owned and operated the store on the corner, and after the fire they rebuilt the south part of what is now the present building. The restaurant part was added many years later.

Farther up the street was Costa's Blacksmith Shop. This building was torn down and a

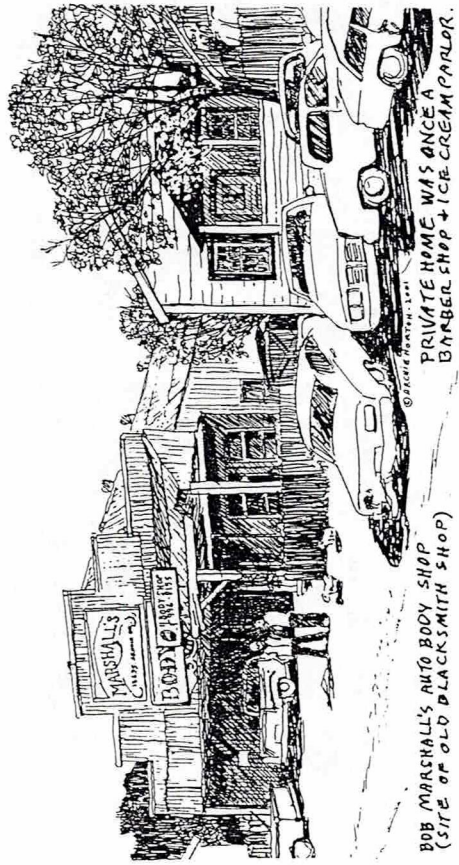
There's a story about how kids in town use to rattle the tie lines on the steel bridge, making a terribly loud racket. One time, Frank Thierkoff, a railroad employee who lived up the road, came out of his house and let fire with a shot gun right over the heads of the kids. There was a large swimming hole under the steel bridge and kids use to dive off the bridge into the hole; they probably dove in when they were fired at.

#### 4) Across the bridge to RoseAnn's Haircutting:

Here is where the *Northwestern Pacific* came into the *Glen Ellen Station*, the terminus for the train trip that originated in Tiburon. It came up the valley from Sonoma, and the railroad ran next to the present Carmel Avenue.

Facing the post office, one would see the rails heading north, passing next to the station-master's house, which was located where the veterinarian's hospital is now. That house was moved after the sale of the NWP right-of-way, and is now an office building. The vet's building (once a home) and the Glen Ellen Grocery were built by the Meglen family, oldtimers in Glen Ellen.



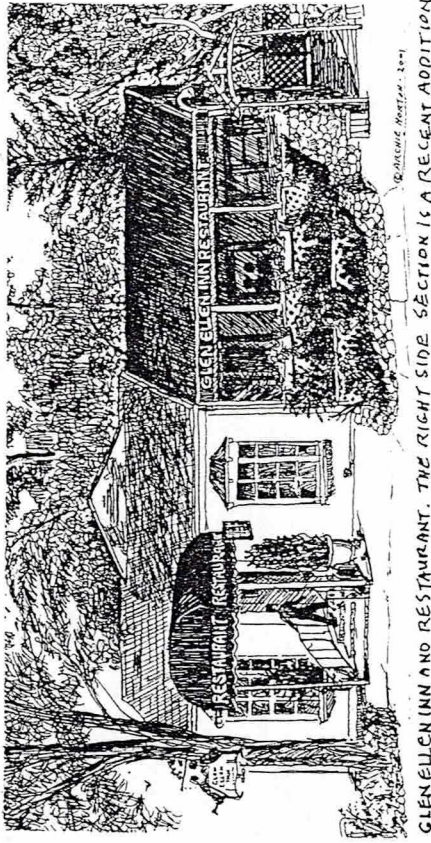


In short, there were no other buildings in all the stretch along Calabazas Creek from the bridge to the Gaige House, except for the Station Master's house, the depot, the turntable, engine house and water tower, the latter three all farther back and north of the train station.

Right there on the corner of Carmel and Horn Ave. was Frank Thierkoff's home and saloon. All that remains is the big Oak tree which served as a hitching post for riders that came to socialize at the bar. Some say there were anywhere from eight to 13 saloons in greater Glen Ellen at one time.

#### 5) Moving on to Marshall's Body Shop:

There was a blacksmith's shop here in the early days; it is shown as being vacant on the 1899 & 1911 Sanborn maps. Blacksmith shops were once as prevalent as auto repair shops and gasoline stations are today. There were at least three here in Glen Ellen at one time. The building was torn down or burned down and Ralph Horne built an auto repair shop there in '29. Jim Norrbom bought the building in 1941 and had his auto repair business here in town



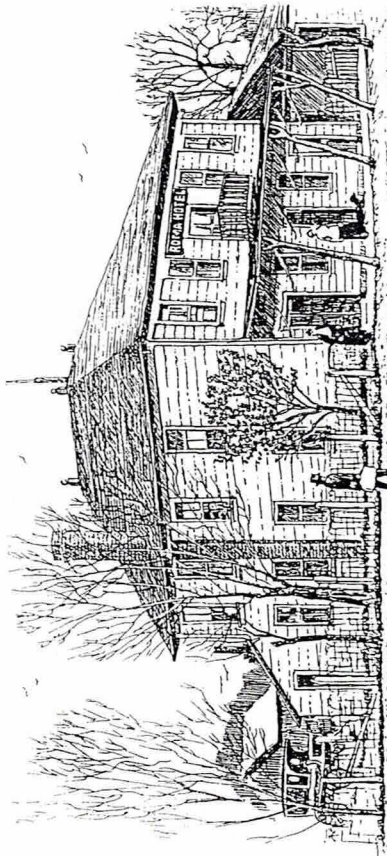
Across the street is the Glen Ellen Inn. The Inn was built in the 40's by Henry Garric and his father. It was originally a barber and beauty shop and later became a liquor store.

Carquinez St. was named after the railroad that came into town on the east side, the Santa Rosa - Carquinez RR, later the Southern Pacific. The tracks came into town just this side of Gibson and parallel to it. There was a two-story station just north of Carquinez, a set of horse corrals farther north, and an SP stationmaster's house and workmens' house on the right side of upper Carquinez. The corrals were used to hold old horses brought in by train from the east. These horses were herded over Sonoma Mountain Rd. to disposal sites in the Petaluma area.

#### 7) Moving to the Glen Ellen Square area:

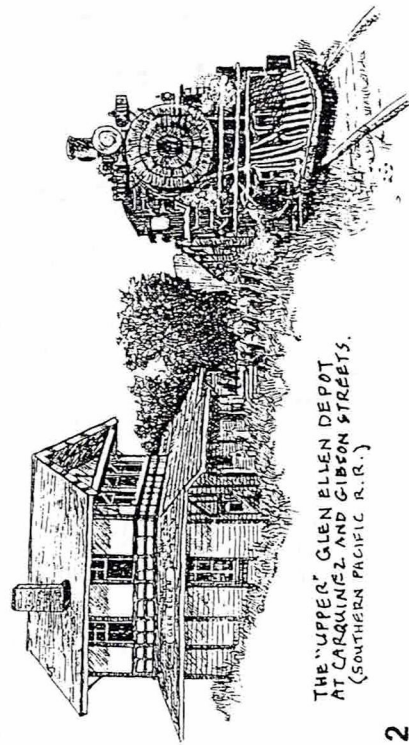
The west side of Arnold Dr. (Glen Ellen Ave.) was devoid of buildings. Paul Thompson, grandson of Redwood Thompson, an immigrant from 1850's, built a plumbing shop on the corner (now a restaurant) in the 1940's. (see sketch on page 15)



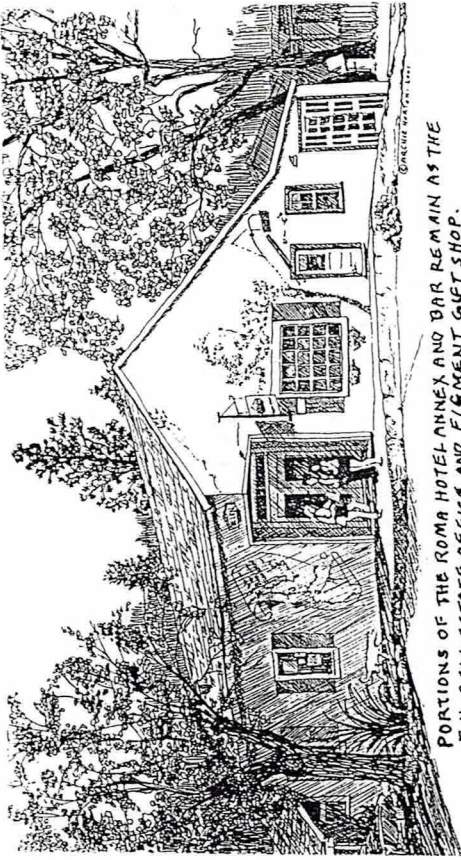


ROMA HOTEL WAS LOCATED BETWEEN F. H. ALLEN REAL ESTATE AND MARSHALL'S BODY SHOP.

Here on the corner was the *Roma Hotel Annex and Bar*; at least portions of the structure survive. The *Roma Hotel* was built next door to it around 1899 (where the triplex is now). There were several other hotel cottages on this corner property. The *Roma Hotel Annex and Bar* has been used in many ways. It was a variety store for years and Bill's Hardware Store. In the back there once was a hamburger and malt shop frequented by locals. When was the demise of the *Roma Hotel*? Sometime in the 30's. The lumber from the building was used by Pancrazi, the owner, to build the triplex and by a Dr. Sooley for his home up on Sonoma Mountain. The hotel had a restaurant and catered to railroad men from the NWP and Southern Pacific.



THE "UPPER" GLEN ALLEN DEPOT AT CARQUINEZ AND GIBSON STREETS. (SOUTHERN PACIFIC R.R.)



PORTIONS OF THE ROMA HOTEL ANNEX AND BAR REMAIN AS THE F. H. REAL ESTATE OFFICE AND FINEMENT GIFT SHOP.

for many years. There is an interesting story told about this building. Horne contracted with a man who brought all the building materials on one large truck. The forms for the concrete floor were used as rafters. Almost every piece of building material was used up. The builder left with one box of scraps when he was through. The contractor went east and became one of the earliest prefabricators in the nation.

The small house next door on the corner of Horn and Arnold was built before 1899. It has always been a residence but was also a barber shop before 1900 and later served as an ice cream parlor as well as the owner's home.

#### 6) *Moving on to the corner of Carquinez:*

This could be called Pancrazi corner. Up Carquinez, on the right side of the street, was the site of the Pancrazi Movie House. It had a number of uses during the first world war era. Leopold Justi, the town judge, tried his court cases there. It held a premiere showing of Jack London's "Sea Wolf" in the 1910's.



